

Appl. No. 10/707,396
Amdt. dated June 13, 2006
Reply to Office action of March 13, 2006

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-5, 7-11 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claims 6, 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Claims 13 and 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

1. Rejections of claims 1-5, 7-11 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 1-5, 7-11 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dyer, US patent No. 6,747,306 in view of Arnold, US patent No. 5,937,296, as cited on pages 2-6 of the above-identified Office action.

Response:

Claim 1 has been merged with claims 12-13 to overcome the rejection of claim 1. Claim 13 had previously been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. No new matter has been added through these changes. Reconsideration of claim 1 is hereby requested.

Claims 2-5, 7-11, and 16 are dependent upon claim 1, and therefore they should be allowable if the amended claim 1 is allowable. Reconsideration of claims 2-5, 7-11 and 16 is hereby requested.

2. Rejections of claims 6, 12 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 6, 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dyer, Arnold and in further view of Radens et al., US patent No. 6,437,388, as cited on 6-7 of the above-identified Office action.

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Response:

Claim 15 has been amended as dependent upon claim 1 because the contents of claim 12 are added into claim 1. Since claims 6, 12 and 15 are dependent upon claim 1, they should be allowable if the amended claim 1 is allowable. Reconsideration of claims 6, 12 and 15 is hereby requested.

3. Allowable subject Matter:

Claims 13 and 14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response:

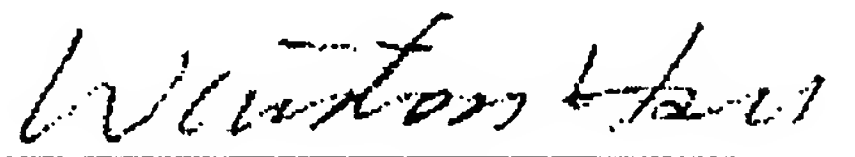
The contents of claim 13 and its dependent claim 12 have been added to the currently amended claim 1 to overcome the rejection of claim 1, and claims 12-13 have been canceled. Therefore, the amended claim 1 should be allowable. Claim 14 has been amended as dependent upon the currently amended claim 1. Accordingly, claim 14 that depends upon claim 1 should be allowable. Reconsideration of claim 14 is hereby requested.

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Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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Sincerely yours,



Date: June 13, 2006

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